

## **RESOLUTION**

### **USF Faculty Senate petitions USF administration to implement policies to protect the health and safety of the USF community.**

**Whereas**, the USF Faculty Senate is charged with advising the President, Provost, and Senior Vice President for USF Health of the University of South Florida, and "has the responsibility to review and make recommendations to them considering decisions on all matters pertaining to the welfare of the University"; and

**Whereas**, USF administration has an obligation to protect the health and well-being of their faculty, students, staff, and surrounding communities, as laid out in the Principles of Community; and

**Whereas**, as of March 9, 2020, Governor Ron DeSantis declared a Public Health Emergency in the State of Florida that was ended on May 3, 2021; and

**Whereas**, on June 9, 2020 the USF Board of Trustees approved a careful, phased reopening plan aimed at protecting the health and safety of the university community; and

**Whereas**, as of July 27, 2021, the CDC added a recommendation for fully vaccinated people to wear masks in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission; and

**Whereas**, vaccinations are not mandated, vaccinations do not uniformly prevent the transmission of the virus, and vaccination status cannot be surveyed for all faculty, students, and staff; and

**Whereas**, Florida Department of Health data indicate that new case rates, test positivity rates, and deaths have been steadily increasing in Florida since June, 2021; and as of August 15th, 2021, Community Transmission rates remain high in each of the counties that make up the USF community, including Hillsborough, Pinellas, Manatee, and Sarasota counties, that far exceed the requirements in the 2020 plan to move instruction to online delivery; and

**Whereas**, USF is currently scheduled to return to in-person classroom settings in the fall semester 2021 using classroom configurations that in many cases will not permit social distancing; and

**Whereas**, USF administration, in its recent Classroom Guidance for Instructional Faculty, has imposed further restrictions on mitigating the spread of the virus and interfered with pedagogical decisions best left to faculty; therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Faculty Senate believes that USF policy should require vaccinations of all persons on USF campuses who are eligible for vaccination unless they can provide documentation of a medical exemption; further that USF policy should be to follow CDC guidelines with regard to masks, and to create opportunities for social distancing in classrooms.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that since the Florida Governor has prohibited simple and effective mitigation strategies that would enable classroom health and safety, the USF administration should maintain a flexible approach to online course delivery that allows faculty to use virtual and hybrid modes of delivery until there is no greater than a moderate risk of transmission in schools in the communities surrounding the USF campuses, according to CDC Core Indicators.<sup>1</sup>

Passed: August 18, 2021

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/schools-childcare/indicators-thresholds-table.pdf>